

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Suite 1321, Federal Building  
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Jackson, MS 39269  
COM (601)965-5205 FAX (601) 965-4940

November 7, 2005

Mr. Donald Silawsky  
Office of Petroleum Reserves, (FE-47)  
Department of Energy 1000  
Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington,  
DC 20585-0301

Dear Mr. Silawsky:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed expansion of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve at Richton, Perry County, Mississippi. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for insuring compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, federal programs that contribute to the necessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses will be minimized. It follows that federal programs shall be administered in a manner that, as practicable, will be compatible with state and local government and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

Based on the limited data provided, NRCS was unable to determine if the Richton, Mississippi storage site and associated pipelines to the Gulf of Mexico would impact prime farmland. In order to properly evaluate the impacts of the proposed project on prime farmland, a "Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects", Form No. NRCS-CPA--106 should be completed.

Please contact Mr. Wesley Kerr, Area Conservationist, Hattiesburg, MS by phone at [REDACTED] for assistance in preparing Form No. NRCS-CPA-106. Mr. Kerr's area encompasses the 24 most southern counties within the state of Mississippi.

If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Homer L. Wilkes State  
Conservationist

cc: Kim Harris, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS, Jackson, MS  
Wesley Ken, Area Conservationist, NRCS, Hattiesburg, MS